

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. I.

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No. 11

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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EASTER.

Ay, the lilies are pure in their pallor, the roses
are fragrant and sweet,
The music pours out like a sea-wave, breaking in
praise at his feet,
Pulsing in passionate praises that Jesus has risen
again;
But we watch for the signs of his living in the
life of the children of men.

Wherever the mantle of pity falls soft on a wound
or a woe,
Wherever a peace or a pardon springs up to o'er-
master a foe,
Wherever a soft hand of blessing outreaches to
succor a need,
Wherever springs healing for wounding, the Mas-
ter is risen, indeed.

Wherever the soul of a people, arising in courage
and might,
Bursts forth from the errors that shrouded its
hope in the gloom of the night,
Wherever, in sight of God's legions, the armies
of evil recede,
And truth wins a soul or a kingdom, the Master
is risen, indeed.

So fling out your banners, brave toilers! bring
lilies to altar and shrine!
Ring out, Easter bells! He has risen: for thee is
the token and sign.
There's a world moving sunward and godward;
ye are called to the front, and must lead.
Behind are the grave and the darkness: the Mas-
ter is risen, indeed!

—From "*Lend a Hand.*"

THE OLD AND NEW VIEW OF THE HEREAFTER.

When we seek to know what heaven is to be, we must ask what it is here; for certainly the kingdom of heaven comes also in this world. There are hours of heavenly peace in this life. We sit sometimes in heavenly places with Jesus even now. Heaven is satisfaction, content, the peace of God which passeth understanding.

Now, this heaven below comes from the three elements which are to abide,—faith, hope, and love. Faith means the sight of the invisible reality which is below the passing appearance. It is the evidence of the reality of truth, goodness, wisdom. We endeavor to know, because we believe there is really something to be known. Faith, therefore, is the condition of knowledge. And what a joy and peace come to the soul from knowledge,—knowledge of the laws of the universe, knowledge of the divine work in history, knowledge of our capacity of improvement, knowledge of Christ as a personal friend and benefactor!

Knowledge, then, abides in the other world because faith abides,—faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. No doubt new varieties of knowledge will there be opened to us. We may then know the nature of life, the nature of the soul, the enigma of moral freedom, the cause and reason of the existence of evil, all of which are hidden from us here. But, as knowledge enlarges, faith will extend itself further, and root itself more deeply in the soul.

And hope also will continue in the other life. To hope means to look forward to something better; but, unless that something better can be reached, the hope must perish. Therefore, continued hope implies continued progress. It means ever-increasing knowledge, activity, power; ever-increas-

ing capacity for spiritual improvement; a never-ceasing ascent toward God,—powers growing more angelic, activity becoming more divine.

And we may say, as the surest of all certainties, that love will abide,—love of those who are above us in grandeur and beauty, love for those who are close beside us in sympathy and fellowship, love toward those who are most helpless and needy,—the souls which sit furthest down in darkness and the shadow of death. The highest seraphs nearest the throne of God must come to the most desperate and most forlorn.

According to the new theology, the angels and seraphs see God in his creatures. They come near to the Great Throne of Glory, not by looking up and forgetting all below, but by going with Jesus to seek and save the lost. Can Jesus be satisfied in sitting at the right hand of God in personal bliss, while his work below is still so poorly done, his church here so imperfect, his great redemption unfulfilled? When he said, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (or the consummation of the age), did not that declaration truly show that in going up he was not going away? People talk of Christ's second coming as though it were some far-off event. There is no second coming. Christ is always coming. He is always with us; and he comes nearer to the world by every advance in righteousness, every conquest of good over evil. Whenever any tyranny of man over man gives way, Christ comes; whenever the poor and despised are elevated, Christ comes; whenever the lowly are fed with the bread of life, Christ comes. He comes to you and me whenever we are enabled to deny ourselves, and take up our cross for truth and justice.

All this argument is founded on what we know by our experience of the essential nature of the gospel of Christ. If we know anything certainly of this great revelation through Jesus, we know it as a revelation of love. The atoning work of Jesus binds together in the golden cord of love all the creatures of God. The love of Christ constrains us to a love of humanity. Christ lived and died for all, not chiefly for the good, the pious, the virtuous, the advanced and superior souls, but for poor, struggling, sinful mortals, beset by easy temptation, fighting with poor success against evil

habits, longing to be better, but so discouraged, helpless, forlorn. Those who are whole need not a physician, but the sick. These helpless ones are dear to the heart of the great Master of this divine science of love. To-day, as at first, he and his must be still occupied in seeking and saving those who are lost.

We often read and hear discussions on the question "whether we shall recognize our friends hereafter." How can we ever doubt it? If love abides, are we not to know those whom we love? What would immortality be if we were to go there alone, separated from all the loved ones, the knowledge of whom has made the very essence and sweetness of our human life? Would that be immortality if we left behind us the richest part of our souls? The best that is in us has come to us from love to others and their love to us. Let that perish in forgetfulness, and we should go into the other world only half alive. We should have lost the best part of the results of our earthly life. That we should be thus separated from our friends was not the view of the great Teacher. He emphasized in his last wonderful conversation with his disciples that his "going up" was not going from them. "I go away, and come to you," said he. He came nearer to them when he seemed to go. He told them: "I go to prepare a place for you. And, if I go to prepare a place for you, I shall come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Shall we know each other in the other world? Yes, far better than we know each other here. There all disguises and concealments, all diffidence and distrust, shall fall away from the soul; and we shall have the joy, perhaps the highest joy we have known on earth, of coming into intimate union with those we love. The heart-rending misunderstandings of this life will cease. The cruelties born of ignorance will be no more. The harsh, cold, bitter judgments we pass on each other will be left behind.

If, in a long life here, I have gained anything which is worth keeping, it is the knowledge and friendship and love of pure, generous, noble souls. Am I to lose that great inheritance? Am I to go into the other world poor, lonely, homesick, alone? I do not so understand the lessons of expe-

rience or the facts of observation. When all other memory fades from the mind of the dying, when his other thoughts are bewildered, the other impressions of time effaced, he still shows by a faint pressure of the hand, by a feeble sign of his head, that his love remains. The last look of the dim eye seeks the faces of those he loves. The last faint whisper of the failing voice is a murmur of blessing on those dear ones. Love is stronger than death: will it not survive the grave?

Yes: when I open my eyes on a new world, I expect to come once more into the company of those who have been my inspiration, my comfort, my joy, in this life. I shall learn what these years have been teaching them, and they shall be again my friendly companions and helpers. I shall see again the parents and the dear children whose love has sweetened my life. I shall be a little child once more myself. Yes; and I hope to come very near to my Master, Jesus, and to have my errors corrected, and be taught the alphabet of a higher language of truth. Not all at once, perhaps; for the laws of gradation and limitation will apply there as here. But, if faith and hope and love abide, then there will be always more of knowledge, more of work, and more of love in that divine beyond. With such views as these, we can be better consoled for the loss of those who leave our sides. We can be more ready to go ourselves when the time comes.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Not ours to breathe that early air,
Not ours that fragrant store to bring,
And at the open sepulchre
To find the angel's radiant wing.
Not ours sad Mary's tears to weep
O'er the stolen treasure of that grave,
Not ours that mournful watch to keep,
Not ours that vanished form to crave.
Not for our eyes that vision bright
Of that dear form beheld once more;
Those tones our eyes may not delight,
Nor hands of ours those wounds explore.
Yet shineth full on our glad eyes
The lustre of that wondrous morn;
For us the Lord of life doth rise;
Our Lord, our Lover, is new born.

Yes, ours the gain without the loss!
The glory ours, without the gloom!
Nought but our refuge-place that cross,
Nought but our treasure-house that tomb.

The grief that streamed from Mary's eyes
Our settled spirits may not move;
Yet with her joy our gladness vies
To greet the Master whom we love.

We meet no fearful throng by night;
We dread no tidings dolorous;
Yet shines midst us the Saviour bright,
Yet speaketh he sweet peace to us.

No lips of ours the news gainsay,
No witness do our hands require;
Oh, sure and sweet the hold we lay
Upon the Lord of our desire!

We envy not the eyes that saw,
Since God hath given our souls to see.
O souls thrice-blessed, that could draw
Thy latest blessing, Lord, from thee!

We sweetly store those words divine,
And lowly wait and trustful love,
Till bright on us thy face shall shine,
And ours shall be thy smile above.

—*T. H. Gill.*

Jesus said: Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God; believe also in me. . . . I go to prepare a place for you.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. . . .

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. . . .

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

Thursday brings us to the Upper Chamber, the feast of love, the eating of the Passover, the Last Supper, the memorial washing of the feet, and those wonderful discourses in the heart of John's Gospel which have comforted countless souls for near two thousand years. Here we have communion with the soul of souls; seasons when we rise out of controversy into trust; when tempting thoughts leave us, and angel

thoughts come to minister to us; when we feel God near, and make his arm a pillow for our weary souls; when faith becomes sight, and hope fruition; when lowliest services wrought in love are fragrant with the breath of heaven; when the bread of life is broken, and the cup of blessing poured; when our prayer forgets to ask, in its desire to praise. Let us come closer to that holy spirit in which Jesus lived. But we cannot stay in this Upper Room. Like the Master, we must arise and gird ourselves to wash the feet of those more weary.—*W. P. Tilden.*

It is no wonder that to the disciples of Jesus it seemed that "the power of his resurrection" was manifested afresh in the life of every one of his followers. The soul which knows "the power of his resurrection" is the one which looks to, and believes in, and loves the things which he loved and which he *lived*. It seeks those things which its Master sought; and it seeks them, as he sought them, as *realities*.

It is only when some remarkable experience opens to us the depth of meaning that there is in life that we realize how on the surface we have been living; above what unsuspected deeps of heavenly grace. It is by the supreme moments in our lives that we learn the meaning of all of life.—*H. W. Foote.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all matter for this department to Mrs. J. B. Millet, 150 Charles Street, Boston, Mass.]

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GIVERS AND RECEIVERS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received '*Black Beauty*'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.—Do not send *books* to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

[The title of the book "In His Name" used in the above notice in previous numbers of this paper has been misunderstood to be a password of The Cheerful Letter Exchange. It was the interesting little book by Dr. E. E. Hale, which we took as an example, supposing that most of our readers were familiar with it, by name at least.]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

I have *Scribner's Magazine* for 1892, and several scattering numbers of other magazines, which I will gladly give to any one who desires them. Please address Mrs. John Pickering, 18 Broad Street, Salem, Mass.

Miss H. L. Pratt, 396 Beacon Street, Boston, would like to send the *Unitarian* to some one who would care for it.

"A Modern Telemachus," "The Shadow of a Dream," and some back numbers of the *Unitarian* are offered by Miss Mary D. Barrett, 4 Gardner Street, Allston, Mass.

The Framingham Alliance offers the *Unitarian Review* for 1885, '86, '87, '88; the *Unitarian* for 1886, '87, '88, '89, '90, '91; *Lend a Hand* for 1890, '91. Address Miss A. E. Munroe, Framingham, Mass.

The Lowell Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange offers the following books, one copy of each:—

"The Cloister and the Hearth," Charles Reade; "Old Curiosity Shop," "Our Mutual Friend," Dickens; "Kenilworth," Scott; "Last of the Mohicans," Cooper; "Last

Days of Pompeii," Bulwer; "Old Lady Mary," Mrs. Oliphant. Also these periodicals: the *Unitarian*, *Christian Register*, the *Commonwealth*, back numbers of *Youth's Companion*, and odd numbers of *Scribner's*, the *Century*, and *New England Magazines*. Address Miss Helen A. Whittier, 38 Kirk Street, Lowell, Mass.

Mrs. Henry C. Weston, 177 Beacon Street, Boston, will give and send the following books: "Soldiers Three," "Tales from the Hills," Kipling; "Queen Mary," Tennyson; "Life in the Open Air," Winthrop; "Miss Curtis," Mrs. K. G. Wells; "Oldport Days," Higginson; "Courtship of Miles Standish," Longfellow; "Lorna Doone," R. D. Blackmore.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* for last year is offered by Miss Susanna Saunderson, 74 Broad Street, Lynn, Mass.

The *Illustrated News* for 1892 is offered by Mrs William B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

The Cambridge Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to give the following books, for which address Mrs. William Cook, 71 Appleton Street, Cambridge, Mass:—

"American Girl in London"; "Aunt Telpeth's Baby"; "Acrostics in Prose and Verse"; "Adam Bede"; *Babyland*, odd numbers; "Blunders of a Bashful Man"; "Ben Benson" (for children); "Berkeley, the Banker," H. Martineau; "Black Beauty"; *Century* for 1887; *Cosmopolitan* from June, 1892, for year; *Christian Register*, 1888-90; "Carriston's Gift," Hugh Conway; "Called Back," Hugh Conway; "Children's Picture Fable Book"; *Current Literature*, seven numbers, 1892; "The Divine Companion"; "Derrick Vaughan," Edna Lyall; *Every Saturday* for 1867 and 1868; *Every Other Sunday*, odd numbers; "Eve," Baring-Gould; "Ecce Homo"; "Evan Dale"; the *Exeter Pictorial Magazine*; "English History," by Montgomery; "Falling Leaves"; Fasquelle's Introductory French Courses; "French History," by Montgomery; "Gleanings from the Poets"; "Going Home," Winslow; "Go Ahead," Castlemon; "Gallegher, etc.," R. H. Davis; "Great Truths for Little Children"; "Gladys," M. G. D.; "History of Germany," Markham; "How Plants grow"; "Her Mother's Darling," J. H.

Riddell; Harper's First, Second, Third, and Fourth Readers; *Juvenile Miscellany*, London, ten numbers; Keats's Poems; "Kit and Kittie," Blackmore; *Littell's Living Age*, ninety-five numbers; "Lady of Glynn"; "Locksley Hall," Tennyson; "The Little Princess" (child's book); "Merle's Crusade," R. M. Cary; the *Myrtle Branch*, three odd magazines; *Century* for 1890, eight numbers; *Illustrated American*, 1890-91; "Mona's Choice," Mrs. Alexander; "Misadventure," Norris; "The Maddoxes"; "Making of the American Nation" (child's book), Arthur Gilman; "Strange Story," Bulwer; "Sage of Sixteen," Walford; "Songs for the Little Ones"; "Standard Selections"; "Three Little Spades" (child's book); "Through the Long Nights," Lynn Lynnton; "Touchstone of Peril," R. D. Forrest; the *Unitarian* from November, 1892; "Uncle, Peep, and I" (child's book); *Wide Awake* 1882 and 1888; "Their Wedding Journey," Howells; "Wild Roses of Cape Ann," Larcom; "Wilfrid Cumbermede," George MacDonald; "The World against Her," E. P. Roe; "Wreck of the 'Grosvenor,'" W. Clark Russell; "Which shall it be?" Mrs. Alexander; "Stories for the Young," Mrs. Lee; "Feet and Wings" (illustrated child's book); "Budget for Boys and Girls"; "Mrs. Dives's Jewels," W. Clark Russell; "The Evil Genius," Wilkie Collins; "Ivanhoe," Sir Walter Scott; "Mary Barton," Mrs. Gaskell; "Pinch of Experience," Walford; "Seven Years and Mair"; "Pickwick Papers," Dickens; "History of my Pets," Grace Greenwood; "All Pictures" (a book for the nursery); "Within the Precincts," Mrs. Oliphant; Monroe's Second, Third, and Fourth Readers; Appleton's First, Third, and Fourth Readers; Longman's Third and Fourth Readers; Swinton's Second Reader; "Little Hitty Brown" (child's book); "Diana of the Crossways," Meredith; *Lippincott*, one number, containing "Two Soldiers," by King; "Day unto Day"; "A Daily Food"; "The Little Minister," Barrie; "A Noble Wife"; *Our Little Ones*, 1892; "An Old Man's Love," Trollope; "Our World Reader"; *Pall Mall Budget*; "Pendennis"; "Poetry for Children"; "Paul and Christina," Amelia Barr; "The Prelate"; "Pax Vobiscum"; "Physics," Balfour Stewart; "Phantom Fortune," Miss Braddon; "Reveries of a Bachelor," Ik Marvel; "Reaping

the Whirlwind," Mary Cecil Hay; "Reproach of Annesley," Maxwell Grey; "Sisters Abroad," Miss Channing; "Struggle for Life"; *Sunday-school Garland* (paper for children); "Spare Hours," John Brown, M.D.; "Robinson Crusoe."

I have a copy of "Robert Elsmere," "The Last Days of Pompeii," Denman Thompson's "Old Homestead," also the December number of the little paper called *Our Young People*. I will send them to any one who would care for them. Address, Miss M. Carrie Hatch, Quincy, Mass.

A correspondent will be furnished to any boy from ten to seventeen years of age who will send his address to Mrs. M. W. Currier, 79 Moore Street, Cambridgeport, Mass.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass., offers "The Life and Times of Jesus: narrated by Thomas Didymus," "Deacon Herbert's Bible Class," "The Christian Doctrine of Prayer," all by James Freeman Clarke.

If Miss C. A. Lincoln, who offers *North American Review*, *Forum*, and *Harper's*, will kindly send her address to Mrs. Millet, 150 Charles Street, the offer will appear in the next number of *The Cheerful Letter*.

Miss Alice Chase, 15 Elmo Street, Dorchester, Mass., offers the *Housewife* as it comes out.

Mrs. R. M. Staigg, 18 Louisburg Square, Boston, Mass., offers "A Living Faith," by George S. Merriam; "Life and Letters of Mme. Swetchine"; "Selections from Writings of Mme. Swetchine."

REQUESTS.

The Ladies' Home Journal is asked for by Miss Elva Quidor, Mt. Vernon, Ohio; Miss Carrie E. Wells, 1942 North 30th Street, Lincoln, Neb.; Mrs. D. O. Gilbert, Benkelman, Dundy Co., Neb.; Mrs. John B. Davis, Parachute, Garfield Co., Col.; Mrs. John Simmons, Lodge Pole, Neb.; Miss C. Maude Lucas, Ivy P.O., Lyon Co., Kan.

The Housewife and the *Christian Union* are asked for by Mrs. E. F. Downing, 43 Maplewood Avenue, Portsmouth, N.H.; Mrs. A. W. Butler, Mechanic Falls, Me.

The Chautauquan Magazine, either past or current numbers, is asked for by Mr. A. L. Brabaud, Sheboygan, Wis.; Mrs. Julia E. Merriam, Pequabuck, Conn.

Any reading matter by Mrs. J. E. Barns, Jenny Lind, Sebastian Co., Ark.

The New England Magazine is asked for by Mrs. Joshua Hills, Kent, Wash.; Miss Myrtle Meyers, Madison, N. Dak., Box 472; Mrs. Seymour Carpenter, Stafford Springs, Conn.

Miss Sophia Kittle, Vroman, Lincoln Co., Neb., would like Higginson's "Young Folks' History of the United States," or some other good United States History.

Mrs. John Morgan, Dunlor, Whitman Co., Wash., asks for "Ben-Hur."

Peterson's Magazine is asked for by Mrs. Sarah Hunt, Box 378, Marietta, Ga.

Mrs. May D. Jones, North Platte, Neb., would like "a book on book-keeping."

Mrs. Lou M. Freeman, Correctionville, Ia., would like any of Edna Lyall's novels (excepting "We Two"), also either *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, or *Cosmopolitan*.

Miss Mamie Gunning, Cushing, Woodbury Co., Ia., asks for "The Newcomes" or some other of Thackeray's books.

I would like to receive "Life and Voyages of Columbus," "Life of Dorothea Dix," and any of the books written by Miss Alcott. Will read, and then place them in a circulating library. Address Mrs. M. Pease, North Hudson, Essex Co., N.Y.

Mr. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Col., is trying to maintain a little Unitarian Society, and has opened a free reading-room. He would be glad of any periodicals or good novels.

(*The Nation* is being sent him.)

Mr. Henry W. Fooshee, Naples, Ill., would be very glad to have the *Scientific American* regularly. He would also like some good light literature to read to his aged mother. They are both invalids.

I received a copy of *The Cheerful Letter* on Saturday, and enjoyed it so much. I had never seen a copy of it before. In it I saw your offer of books, and would be so glad to get "Pendennis," "The Virginians," and "The Adventures of Philip." I am particularly fond of Thackeray, and have long wanted to read these books, but couldn't afford to buy them. I am a young mother with three children, the youngest not three weeks old. My health is very poor. I am

quite a "shut-in," and reading is my only recreation. I would be so very thankful for these books. . . . You don't know what a boon these books would be to me. Address, Mrs. J. Frank Anderson, P.O. Crewe, Va. ("Pendennis" has been sent.)

I am a feeble old lady, and my only pleasure is in reading. I would like to have "The Old Ma'am's Secret" and a "Sage of Sixteen"; and, if you have any books that you think would interest a boy of fifteen, please send them. Mrs. W. C. Allison, Myrtle, Lincoln Co., Neb.

I receive *The Cheerful Letter* regularly, and send thanks to the sender, whoever it may be. Can any one send me the *Jenness-Miller Magazine* regularly as soon as they are through with it? I receive several papers, and find them very comforting; for, when one is sick, and out in a lonely country place, good reading helps to pass the hours. When I have the postage, I shall send a few books I have to Mrs. V. A. Lucier. With good wishes to all, I remain, truly yours, Florence Criste, Madeira, Ohio.

Last month a copy of "Patience Strong's Outings" was offered in the Book Club. A number of requests were received, and there was but one copy to send. Since then one other copy has been given. The following persons would be glad to receive it: Mrs. M. A. Glenn, Holloway, Person Co., N.C.; Mrs. R. F. A. Williams, Abington, Conn.; Mrs. Elizabeth Miller, 1311 14th Street, Washington, D.C.; Mrs. M. Pease, North Hudson, Essex Co., N.Y.; Mrs. J. Frank Anderson, Crewe P.O., Va.

A young girl, sixteen years old, living in a very small country town in California, desires correspondence. Her address will be given by the editor. Write to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

There is a scarcity of the following numbers of *The Cheerful Letter*: October, January, and March. Branches which have extra numbers, or individuals who do not keep nor give away their copies, will confer a favor by sending them to the editor, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass. N.B.—As we desire these numbers for invalids or new members of the *Cheerful Letter Exchange*, those who value their copies, or use them to send to invalids, etc., are desired

to take no notice of this request. We ask only for *superfluous* copies.

Will any one who can comply with any of the above requests please notify Mrs. Millet *first*, so as to prevent several copies of the same book being sent to any one person? It often happens that the secretary receives three or four notices that a book "has been sent" to such a person, and it is then too late to prevent it. For instance, Drummond's "Addresses" was asked for not long ago, and in one day Mrs. Millet received four cards saying, "I have sent Drummond's 'Addresses' to Mr. W." If the senders had first written to say, Shall I send? etc., only one copy would have gone, and the others could have been sent elsewhere. The work of the Book Club is increasing so rapidly that, in the interest of its proper organization, attention to the rules given is most earnestly requested.

We desire to call attention to the following point. The object of the Book Club is primarily to distribute books to those who live in lonely places, where there are no libraries. Now, we sometimes receive requests for books from those who live in or near large cities. Several have come from the immediate neighborhood of Boston, others from Philadelphia, New York, etc. While we have warm sympathy for the sick and suffering everywhere, we feel that our books must go to those who live in remote and lonely places where there are no libraries. In some cases, these members have no neighbors, no church, no schools, no roads, and no post-office except at such a distance that the mail comes to them at long intervals. Naturally, the books we offer will go to them. Yet we feel that those who live *near* libraries, in the midst of a book-reading population could easily be supplied if their wants were made known. A card for the Public Library in Boston would bring an invalid all the reading she could need. It would only require that some friend or neighbor should arrange it for her. Or a member of her church could see that an invalid is provided with reading. A little thought would be enough to form some plan.—*Editor*.

LETTERS.

Dear Miss Clarke,—I have read with pleasure your communication in the *Housewife*. I hope you will pardon my presump-

tion in addressing you, but I wish to know something more about your Cheerful Letter Exchange. I have never heard of it before, and I have wondered if by means of it I myself may not be helped to pass some of my lonely hours. You say it is not for shut-ins only, but for any who are lonely, who live in isolated places, and are confined closely at home. I will give you my circumstances, and you may judge for yourself as to whether I am entitled to a place on your list. My mother and myself live alone on a small farm, four miles from the smallest village, though we have a post-office near our home. My mother is seventy-one years of age, so you may know I cannot leave her much. During six years last past I have not been away from home more than four times to remain over night.

I am very lonely at times, and at a loss to know how to pass the time, as, besides all this, I am very hard of hearing, and cannot enjoy society and church privileges, though my general health is fairly good. I have but little means to buy reading matter, though through the kindness of some unknown friends I have a small collection of nice books. I have also the *Housewife* and the *Housekeeper*. My subscription to the *Housewife* expires with the March number. I am afraid I may not be able to renew; and I love the paper so, I do not know how I can give it up. Just now I am suffering from catarrh, and am quite unwell. I am greatly interested in the shut-in department, and do all I can for them; that is, I send reading matter, when I can afford it. But, my means being so limited, I can do but little. I shall send some quilt scraps and cancelled stamps whenever I can. Perhaps I may do some good if it is but little. I do not wish to encroach upon the Shut-in Society, but would like some kindly remembrance if you consider me worthy. So many ask for quilt scraps, but I have not seen any asking for pieces of sateen for a quilt, so that is the kind that I shall ask for,—all kinds, plain and figured, for a crazy quilt. Good magazines would be acceptable, such as *Century*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Arthur's*, etc. Would particularly like a copy of the *Home Maker*, as I have never seen one. Almost any kind of hardy flowers, plants, would be thankfully received,—chrysanthemums (except yellow), dahlia, gladiolus, tuberose roots, or anything

of the kind, as I am passionately fond of flowers. Reading matter I can pass on if postage is furnished. I cannot write many letters, as my means will not permit of it, but will do the best I can. Cannot you write to me, or am I asking too much? Yours, in His Name.

(The editor did not feel at liberty to print the name of this correspondent, but will send it to any one who asks for it. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.)

Through the kindness of Miss Lucy Lewis I have received the January number of *The Cheerful Letter*. What a dear little paper it is, and I was so very pleased to receive it! I feel I want to thank you and all who are doing so much to brighten the lives of us invalids. Reading is my greatest pleasure, as I cannot sew or do anything except write to pass the hours that would otherwise be often sad and lonely. I have been sick fourteen years, and shut in for many years. Once I thought I could not bear my life, but I try to be happy and to do the little I can for others; and there is, I find, even for those shut in, work to do in the way of making a little happiness for others that are lonely. I live on the Susin Bay; and there is quite a fleet here of foreign ships, English, Scotch, etc.

On these ships there are many young men, apprentices, who are fond of reading. As they are far from their homes and among strangers, they are very grateful for a little kindness. I try to have flowers for them, and give all I can get in the way of reading; and it is touching to see how much they appreciate it. And there are men who live by hunting and fishing, who never go anywhere; and they are glad of reading, so I take great pleasure in sending to them. In trying to do this, I find much happiness. I do so dearly love to read, and do not know how I could ever have got through the long years if it had not been for reading. I would so like some of Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney's and some of Virginia Townsend's books. I should not mind how old they were. Please excuse this long letter. May our Father bless you and keep you in his tender care! I love you for the good and noble work you are doing. I would so like to give you some pleasure. I will send you

an Abalone shell from here as soon as I am able to do it up. Yours with love,
Jennie F. Jones.

Address, Mrs. Jennie F. Jones, Martinez,
Contra Costa Co., Cal.

Dear Miss Clarke,—I have been reading the letters in *The Cheerful Letter* for March from the poor shut-ins. How much sorrow there is in the world, and yet how much brightness, too! I have found so many kind friends since I joined the Cheerful Letter Exchange that it has brightened my life, and I have been wonderfully blessed in the way of reading matter. Every one has been so kind to send me or the children something to read, and I have taken great pleasure in passing it on to others that are not able to buy their reading. I only wish that I could do something for the shut-ins. I feel so sorry for those mothers with so many little children, and no church or Sunday-school. I know how to pity them. They are sure of my sympathy, for I lived just so for nine years (no church or school) in the South. I wish I could help more. I do what I can, and I would like to tell all these dear ones that have such a hard time of it a verse that a dear friend sent me. It is this:—

"Thou comest not to thy place by accident:
It is the very place God meant for thee;
And, should'st thou there small scope for
action see,
Do not for this give room for discontent."

I have thought of that so much,—that we are not where we are by accident: we are where God the Father has put us, we are to do the best we can, and leave all the rest with him. Everything will come out right if we will only trust him. Yours sincerely, Mrs. C. E. Deuel.

You can do as you like about putting my letter in *Cheerful Letter*. I thank you very much for the little paper. I read every word of it, and some of it twice over; and through it I have found some very kind friends, who write me such nice, cheering letters that I feel as if I could not be thankful enough for them.

(Thank you very much for your kind letter, and also for writing on one side of the paper, which saves us the trouble of copying. Sometimes we are obliged to delay printing a letter in *The Cheerful Letter*,

or to omit it altogether, because it must be copied first.)

Dear Miss Clarke,—I thought I would write a few lines for *Cheerful Letter*. I received three copies, and liked them very much. I will tell you something about our sunny South. We have peach-trees and plum-trees in bloom now, February 22,—isn't that nice after such a cold winter?—rose-bushes bursting out, everything showing signs of sweet spring. I am almost a shut-in myself. My oldest daughter is a cripple, and has been all her life, twenty-one years. So you see my life is not all sunshine.

I received those books, *Harper's Weekly*, *Youth's Companion*, *Century*, for which I offer my thanks through *The Cheerful Letter*. I have some old *Households* and *Housewives* that I can send to any one wishing them, if they will write to me, informing me where to send them. With many wishes for *The Cheerful Letter* and its readers, I am, respectfully, Mrs. E. Rowe, Melville, St. Landry Parish, La.

P.S.—Could you send me "The Scarlet Letter" and "Stepping Heavenward"? I will take good care of them, and return them. E. R.

("Stepping Heavenward" has been sent. It is not necessary to return books: they are given unless it is specified that they are only lent.)

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

There are all sorts of babies, but the cry-baby is the least lovable of her species and the greatest trial to her family. We have all grown too sensible in these days to whip a child to quiet screaming, yet an effectual remedy seems no nearer than ever. A "Tired Mother," who gave a woful experience in *The Mothers' Nursery Guide*, is replied to in the same magazine in so suggestive a paper that we give part of it for the benefit of the *Housekeepers' Weekly* mothers and their babies. Says the Counsellor:—

"The great danger to avoid, in such a case, is that of cultivating the very tendency you wish to eliminate. This is often done by anything that excites the child's wilfulness or stimulates its combativeness. For this reason I should decidedly avoid all punishments calculated to suggest even the idea of how long the child can hold out,—such

as shutting it into a room, to come out when it has done crying, etc. Nor should I ever, during the fits of excitement, say a word of blame or reproof, or show the least sign of displeasure. However worried and anxious to do or say *something*, the mother should seal her lips. When the attack is over, turn away the child's mind from brooding over it as quickly as possible, letting her see that the attitude of your mind toward her is loving sympathy, not displeasure.

"Never fail to *praise*—and often it may be well to *reward*—the days, perhaps even the half-days, which are passed without an outburst. The result of this will be to gradually bring the child's will into the right attitude. She will wish to control herself. If the successful efforts bring always loving praise, and often some little pleasure, they will soon become a habit. To illustrate:—

"Mary has been a dear, good little girl to-day: she did not cry *once* all day. Mamma is very much pleased with her. She has a pretty book to show her. Mary shall sit up here and look at the pretty pictures."

"The next step is to think of some punishment, not arbitrary, but as a natural result of the screaming. Without laying aside the gentle manner, and carefully avoiding every irritating tone or gesture, let Mary understand that by a fixed, inexorable fate something disagreeable always follows a screaming fit. But mamma must never be angry with her, never even displeased, never think or call her naughty, never fail to be willing to take her in her arms and kiss her.

"Suppose the storm is over. Mary sits or lies exhausted on the floor. Mamma takes her gently in her arms, and rocks her, or sings to her, soothing her and comforting her. Then she says, 'Now, darling, mamma is going to put Mary to bed. Poor Mary is very tired, she has cried so much.' 'No, I don't want to go to bed,' Mary will perhaps say. Take no notice of this, but begin gently to undress her, at the same time talking kindly or singing to her. Sit a few minutes by her, if necessary, and be sure to kiss her before leaving her. Do this or something like it every time Mary screams. Be perfectly firm, when the decree is once issued; yet be gentleness itself in the manner of enforcing it. 'I am sorry, dear. You know Mary cried.' Even the slightest effort at self-

control should be commended. 'Mary did not *mean* to cry, I know: she felt as if she could not help it. Mamma loves Mary, for she tries to be a good girl.'"

Is not such a system, as it is no irritation to either mother or child, worth the trying? *The Housekeepers' Weekly.*

SPRING.

As little children gather round their mother,
And beg her a familiar tale to tell,—
One that is dearer far than any other,
Because so often heard and known so well;

And as they watch her, prompting, should she falter,

And any variation quickly see,
And cry, "Don't tell it so, don't change and alter,

We want it just the way it used to be,"—

So do we come to thee, O Nature—Mother!

And never tire of listening to thy tales.

Tell us thy spring-time story now,—no other,—

That hath a wondrous charm, which never fails.

Tell it with all the old-time strength and glory,

Fill it with many a happy song and shout:

Don't miss one bird or blossom in the story,

Don't leave one daffodil or daisy out.

Tell us each shade in all the trees' soft greening,

Don't skip one blade of grass, one bee, one wren,—

Each little thing has grown so full of meaning

In the dear story we would hear again.

O Mother Nature! thou art old and hoary,

And wonderful and strange things thou canst tell;

But we, like children, love the spring-time story,

And think it best, because we know it well.

—Bessie Chandler.

MISCELLANEOUS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. J. B. Millet, 150 Charles Street, Boston, Mass.

Will our friends kindly note that all material intended for printing in *The Cheerful Letter* (except matter for the *Book Club*) should be sent to the editor, Miss Clarke? This includes both letters and articles. All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper.

Those who desire to join the Cheerful Letter Exchange, whether to correspond with invalids, young mothers, and lonely people, or to send books, or to *receive* letters, books, etc., are requested to send their names to our secretary, Miss Langmaid. No fee is required for such membership.

Those who desire to receive or to offer books are requested to send such requests or offers to Mrs. Millet, for insertion in the Book Club department of *The Cheerful Letter*. Do not send the book to Mrs. Millet (nor to Miss Langmaid nor Miss Clarke) nor ask Mrs. Millet personally for books. Her office is to print these requests and offers in the Book Club, not to send nor to receive the books themselves.

This is the *last number but one* of the year. We have a favor to ask of our subscribers. Will those who are going out of town before May 1 kindly send the subscription for the second year to Miss F. L. Close, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, before leaving the city? This will save us a great deal of trouble. Others will confer a favor by renewing their subscription any time during the month of May.

We have now *nearly* one thousand subscribers, but need quite one thousand to pay the expenses of publication. It would be better to have fifteen hundred, and we trust that those who are able to procure us one or two new subscribers will kindly exert themselves to do so before the end of the current year. With June the second year begins. Those who have been so kind in helping us have our warm thanks.

See letters in this number for the good our little paper is doing, and hopes to do.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

The editor regrets and apologizes for the fact that she can no longer answer all the personal letters she receives. It has become impossible.

Will any one willing to *send* a copy of *The Cheerful Letter* to one not able to subscribe send her address to Miss Dewson as above?

Will all those friends who are now sending magazines or papers regularly to any one be kind enough to write to Mrs. Millet, as above, giving the address of the recipient as well as the name of the periodical and of the sender? Otherwise, some one who asks for a paper, and does not receive it, may lose the opportunity, and we could obtain one for her by printing her request again; or one who offers may receive no immediate response, and could a month later still send the periodical offered.

N.B.—Those who have *already* sent this information, either to Miss Langmaid or to Mrs. Millet, need not write again. It is only from those who have not written that we desire to hear.

To become a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, it is necessary:—

First, either to be a lonely person, or invalid, a young mother (or a mother of any age, who feels enough interest to desire to join the society), or to be in sympathy with these, and desire to write letters, send reading, or cheer their lives in any way.

Second, to send your names to our secretary, Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass., saying that you desire to become a member.

It is also desirable (although not necessary for *each individual*) to take *The Cheerful Letter*, as this is the medium of communication.

“What contributions do you desire for *The Cheerful Letter*?”

Answer. First and most, we desire letters from our far-off correspondents, telling us something about themselves, letters that we may print in *The Cheerful Letter*, signed with the name of the writer.

Next, we want short articles, answering the questions in the Mothers' Council, and on the questions in the Bible Class and History Class.

Third, we want more of our Cheerful Letter Exchange members to offer books in

the Book Club, especially good books on American history.

Will those who write us letters mention whether they are willing that the signature of the writer should be inserted in the paper with the letter? We are sometimes in doubt, especially when the writer, although referring to *The Cheerful Letter*, writes to the editor in a friendly, personal way. Such letters would often interest readers; and we like to make use of them, when permitted.

We make the following suggestions to members of the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

In sending a bound book through the mail, wrap it up carefully in several thicknesses of paper. Protect the corners, if possible. One thin piece of paper is not enough.

Keep your correspondents supplied with P.O. cards. By this we mean, not only send one card or envelope when you send a book or letter, but send a few extra cards, so that they may be able to write a request for a book which they see in *The Cheerful Letter*. Many of our shut-ins are too remote from a post-office to have the opportunity often to buy cards or stamps; and many lack even the very few cents that they need to provide the means of writing. A P.O. card at hand is a real convenience.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly, or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

New Subscribers.—Please send subscriptions for the paper to Miss F. L. Close, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Articles for the paper may be sent for the present to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

The subject of this lesson is interesting from several points of view. To appreciate this better, we will suggest the following:—

1. The narrative itself. If we select the

passages where John is mentioned, and follow them in chronological order, we have a series of historical sketches which finally leave on the mind a vivid impression of a most remarkable man, and a historic period of the greatest importance.

2. The character of John; the scenes in which John is described; his words and actions,—deserve to be carefully considered and compared, that we may gain something more than a superficial knowledge of so rare a character.

3. The spiritual and religious lesson of the life of John. For great men are a powerful influence so long as their memory lasts. What practical lesson shall we learn from the life of John?

4. The influence of the life and death of John upon the history of the New Testament; consequently upon the history of Jesus; and therefore on the religious history of the world.

There is a great field for study, and we can do no more than indicate what the different sides of our subject suggest; but we hope that students will follow up each line of thought so far as practicable.

The narrative. We find the following passages in the New Testament which give us successive scenes in the history of John.

Parentage and birth of John. Luke ii. 5-80.

Preaching of John. Matthew iii. 1-12. Mark i. 2-8, Luke iii. 1-18.

John baptizes Jesus. Matthew iii. 13-18. Mark i. 7-11, Luke iii. 21-23.

The visit of inquiry of the priests and Levites. John i. 19-28.

What John said of Jesus to his own disciples. John i. 29-36.

John's disciples complain to him of Jesus. John's noble answer. John iii. 25-30.

John is cast into prison by Herod. Matthew xiv. 3-5, Mark vi. 17-20, Luke ix. 19, 20.

John sends his disciples to question Jesus. The answer of Jesus, and what he said of John. Matthew xi. 2-19, Luke vii. 18-35.

The death of John. Matthew xiv. 6-11. Mark vi. 28, 29.

What happened after John's death; and what Jesus said. Matthew xiv. 1, 2, and 13. Mark vi. 14-16 and 31, 32, Luke xix. 31-33.

(To be continued.)